

Mr. HOYER. Because there is so much interest in that bill on our side, Mr. Leader, would it be fair to say that that decision would be made prior to the close of business on Monday so that we would have some notice of that in time to fairly consider it?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We will try our best, in consultation with you, to give you some idea of when we could possibly bring that bill, and if it is going to be considered next week and we can fit into the schedule, then certainly we would let you know by probably the end of business Monday.

□ 1230

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we would appreciate that.

The other bills that I would like to talk about, the highway bill conference report the gentleman indicated as a possibility, can the gentleman inform us of the status of that conference and where we are on this bill?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend yielding. I am very encouraged. I serve on the conference committee, so I am very encouraged by the accomplishments and progress that has been made over the course of this week.

I believe there is really only one major issue left to be resolved by the conferees, and that relates to transit funding. Hopefully, that can be resolved prior to the Wednesday night expiration of the current short-term funding measure, and then, as normal, there are a lot of smaller issues that can be resolved by then. I am very hopeful that we can pass that conference report before we leave here next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I presume, am I correct, that the gentleman's effort would be to try to pass it prior to the expiration of the last temporary extension, or would the gentleman anticipate another, which I guess would be the tenth or the eleventh extension; or does the gentleman think he can perhaps get it through prior to Wednesday night?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. Everyone is working as hard as they can. As the gentleman knows, this bill has taken a long time to work out the differences between the House and the Senate. We get very close every time we reach the deadline of an expiration date.

The expiration date is set on Wednesday. Everybody is going to be working over the weekend, and we are working as hard as we can with the goal to bring that conference report to the floor before the expiration of the short-term funding measure.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the leader for his comments and observations. We are certainly hopeful on our side, and I know the gentleman is on his side, that

we get this bill through. It is probably as significant a jobs creation bill as we will pass in this Congress, and it has been delayed for a very long period of time. I know the gentleman has been frustrated by it, and we have been frustrated by it, and hopefully, we can get that done by next week.

The energy bill conference report, can the gentleman tell us where that stands? I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We are working on it. We hope to get it done by the end of next week. It is a very ambitious goal, I must say, to take a bill of this magnitude and, in a matter of 2 weeks, get all the differences worked out between the House and the Senate and bring it to the floor.

This is another item that the House and Senate are working on through the weekend, and at least encouragement has been brought to my attention by the chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce that, with a lot of hard work, it is very possible that we could get this energy conference report to the Members for a vote by the end of next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, in light of the fact, Mr. Leader, I will simply observe that if we get all of those things moving we are going to have a lot of work to do next week, and I presume our Members ought to be prepared for long days and, clearly, if we get all of that done, it will be Friday late before we get out of here.

In light of the fact we will not have a colloquy next week because we will be going on recess for the summer work period, can the gentleman tell us what he anticipates might be on the agenda when we come back on September 6, what might be on the agenda early in the September weeks? Clearly, appropriations bills conference reports, to the extent they are done, will be on the calendar, but other than that, can the gentleman enlighten us as to what your thoughts are? I yield to the leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. We have not made any decisions yet, but obviously the gentleman knows and Members understand that the appropriations process did end with us passing our bills before the July 4 break. The Senate is working on appropriations bills, and we will be doing those conferences as they present themselves.

Also, we do know that at least the first week back, we could be looking at the Coast Guard authorization bill and possibly a research bill from the Committee on Science. That is the first week back. Other bills will be considered during the August district work period, and we will be able to make a more firm announcement to the Members as to what we anticipate having the first week back and, in addition to that, the second week also.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for that information.

Lastly, there are two pieces of legislation, major pieces of legislation that the gentleman did not mention but have been talked about, and that is, of course, the Social Security legislation and the campaign finance legislation, one or the other bill, or both.

Can the gentleman give me his thoughts on where they stand and when they might come on the agenda if, in fact, they will be coming on the agenda?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. The campaign finance committees are still working on those issues. It is quite possible that we could address those issues in September. The way that I am watching the schedule of the other body, we will probably be here at least a week or two after October 1, and we would be working on those issues.

I have every expectation that the Committee on Ways and Means will put out a retirement security bill for us to consider in September or the first of October. And, I am sure the gentleman remembers, we have a reconciliation process that is ongoing. We could have a reconciliation bill in that time period.

So those are some of the major issues that we will be facing in September and October.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader for all of the information.

#### ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 25, 2005

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING THE BALTIC COUNTRIES OF ESTONIA, LATVIA, AND LITHUANIA

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on International Relations be discharged from further consideration of the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 128) expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the Russian Federation should issue a clear